

New York Saturday Evening Post

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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"If you says I cheats—come and see me, Cully!" cried the ragged manikin, shrilly.

SO NEAR—SO FAR.

BY JOHN GOSSIP.

I sung a song when summer days were waning,
A song of unrequited love complaining,
And this it was the winds taught me to say:
"Oh, Florestine! so near to-day—to-morrow so
far, far away!"

While thus my sorrow I sat voicing,
Young hearts around seemed all rejoicing;
Sung into my own, which once was gay:
"Oh, Florestine! so near to-day—to-morrow so
far, far away!"

I sung, I sang, my love was near,
Yet sung so low, no one could hear;
Nor over heard, till parting, I did say:
"Oh, Florestine! so near to-day—to-morrow so
far, far away!"

Was then she taught the burden's meaning,
And then knew she her heart was weaning;
For I had loved, and she all day:
"Oh, Florestine! so near to-day—to-morrow so
far, far away!"

This ye may learn from my refrain,
That one may love and love in vain,
And at the end he can but say:
"Oh, sweetest love! so near to-day—to-morrow so
far, far away!"

FERGUS FEARNNAUGHT;
OR,
Our New York Boys.

A STORY OF THE BY-WAYS AND THOROUGHFARES.

BY GEORGE L. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "FALSE FACES," "ROLL, THE
RECKLESS," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

RAGGED TERRY.

FERGUS remained on the curbstone watching the car until it disappeared in the distance.

"He's a splendid fellow!" he murmured to himself. "His father must be awful rich. It's a nice thing to have a rich father; but I'll never have one now. I wonder who I belong to, anyway?"

This was a thought that had occurred to Fergus' mind very frequently of late. He had not reflected much about it when he first ran away from the almshouse to escape the petty tyranny exercised over him there, but as he grew in years and his struggle with the world became lighter and less exacting, he found himself cogitating over this subject at odd times.

This encounter with Clinton Stuyvesant brought the matter up more vividly to his mind than ever before. The poor, friendless boy, who had been kicked and cuffed and scoffed at by the world ever since he could remember, could but reflect that it would be a better condition in life to have a rich father and a comfortable home.

"Perhaps I've got a father somewhere—who knows?" Fergus asked himself, following up this train of reflection. "Or a mother?"

He shook his head doubtfully here.

"Pears to me if a mother had a nice, likely boy, like I am, she wouldn't go back on him. Pears to me she wouldn't send him to the poorhouse, where they half starve a fellow, and beat him if he grumbles about it. When I get big enough I'll go back and whale that overseer."

Fergus doubled up his fist in a very decided manner as he uttered this boyish threat. But this revengeful feeling speedily passed away, and his thoughts went back to the subject of parents again.

"I must belong to somebody," he mused, "as Clint Stuyvesant said—smart chap, Clint; no starched-up frills about him—and I'd like to find out who. Fleda says my father must have been a gentleman, and she's awful smart at guessing things. What she don't know ain't worth knowing. It would be kind of nice now to find a rich father; but not what I can do well enough for myself, but I'd like to be a young gentleman like Clint, and be somebody of consequence when I got to be a man; alderman of the Fourth Ward, or coroner, or deputy sheriff, or something of that sort."

It must be confessed that Fergus' aspirations were not of a very high order at this period of his life.

He had begun to move slowly up the Bowery, dodging the hurrying throng as he made these reflections, when he saw a pocket handkerchief lying on the sidewalk before him. He stooped quickly and picked it up.

Looking ahead of him he espied a well-dressed lady, and thinking that she had dropped the handkerchief he ran after her.

Just as he broke into this run a cry of "Stop thief!" was uttered behind him. Fergus, in his anxiety to overtake the lady and restore her property to her did not heed this cry.

The surging crowd swept around him and hid her from his view. As he darted in and out in his efforts to overtake the lady, the cry was repeated and taken up by several voices, "Stop thief! Stop thief! Stop thief!"

Fergus was very naturally mistaken for the thief, and several hands were thrust forth to catch him, but he glided away from them with the suppleness of an eel; he was not long in recognizing the situation.

"By Jinks!" he muttered to himself, "they think I've stole the handkerchief, and they are after me. This will never do. Let her whistle for her handkerchief. She'll think I picked her pocket, just as like as not. Nobody believes poor people can be honest."

He thrust the handkerchief hurriedly into his pocket, stopped and joined in the hue and cry, bawling as lustily as any of them: "Stop thief! Stop thief!"

Then, singling out a stout, stolid-faced Dutchman in the crowd, he shouted:

"There he is—that's him! Stop him!"

The Dutchman was instantly seized by the over zealous mob, and during the altercation that ensued, Fergus quietly walked away, turned into Bond street, and directed his progress toward Broadway.

"They can jug the Dutchman, if they want to," he told himself, with a chuckle, "but they can't catch me—I'm too wide awake for that! I'll take the handkerchief home and give it to Fleda. What's the use of a poor coot trying to be honest when everybody takes him for a thief?"

Having come to this conclusion, Fergus paused on the corner of Broadway, and leaning against the lamp-post, gazed at the stream of vehicles which rolled continuously down that busy thoroughfare.

Suddenly a scream burst from the open window of a private carriage, and Fergus, attracted by the sound, saw a woman's head thrust from the window, and her right arm was held toward him, the hand gesticulating in an agitated manner, and he heard her cry out:

"That is he—the boy—there!"

He could not mistake her action; she meant him, beyond a doubt. He cast one wild, startled glance at her, and muttering: "By Jinks! I'm in for it again!" turned and fled precipitately.

"Oh! stop—stop!" came after him, in an agonized cry, but Fergus only redoubled his speed.

The block between Broadway and the Bowery is but a short one, and before the driver could stop his horses and turn the carriage around into Bond street, the fleet-footed boy had disappeared.

Fergus was too familiar with the turns and windings of New York to be easily overtaken, and he knew that the moment he mingled with the ever moving throng upon the Bowery he was safe; so he dashed along at all speed until he reached the corner, turned into the Bowery, and subsided into a walk.

"Phew!" he puffed, drawing a long breath. "Who put up that job on me, I wonder? That couldn't have been the woman that lost the handkerchief—she belonged over here, and the other was a Broadway big bug, and a real nobby one, too, riding in her own carriage, with a driver in livery—and such a handsome face. Oh, by Jinks! if the angels are any prettier than she is they must look stunning!

But what did she want with me?"

Fergus pondered over this in a bewildered way. His brain was clear and acute, his hitherto experience with the world had made it so, but this adventure puzzled him exceedingly.

It was utterly impossible that this woman in the carriage could have been the one who had dropped the handkerchief. A lady of her appearance would never have been walking in such a locality, or even admitting that some chance may have taken her there, she could not have been there at the time he had found the handkerchief, for when he saw the carriage it was rolling down Broadway, going south, and he had stood fully ten minutes upon the corner before it came along. Besides, if it was really the woman who had lost the handkerchief, how could she possibly know that he had found it?

This question, which he mentally put to himself, puzzled Fergus' brain excessively. He could not answer it; he could not understand the action of the lady at all.

He remembered, cogitating in a bewildered manner over the affair, that he had been attracted by the carriage, which was an unusually handsome one, drawn by a span of cream-colored horses, splendid looking animals—and the boy had a keen eye for a good horse, and was critical in its "fine points," having picked up the knowledge some way—and the harness was resplendent with silver trimmings, and the driver wore a stylish-livery, and a cockade on the side of his hat that gave him quite a smart look.

From the horses and the driver Fergus' eyes had wandered naturally to the occupant of the carriage—a lady richly attired, in the prime of her fair womanhood. Her face attracted him with a kind of magnetism which he could not comprehend. His muttered words as he fled had told us the strange impression that her features made upon his mind; and it was while he was gazing at this face in a dreamy kind of a way, and wondering what made his blood thrill so strangely in his veins at the sight of it, that her eyes fell upon him; then she evinced that singular agitation, starting from her seat, thrusting her head through the open window of the carriage, pointing him out and exclaiming vehemently:

"That is he—he the boy—there!"

Sauntering along, with his hands thrust deeply into his trowsers pockets, Fergus pondered over the matter.

"It just beats all!" he told himself. "I never did nothing to her—I know I never did; then what did she want to have me caught for? Guess she must have mistook me for somebody else. Lord, yes—that's it—what a ninny I was never to have thought of that before."

Fergus felt quite a relief of mind when he came to this conclusion; it was such a simple solution of the perplexing incident; and having thus settled it to his own satisfaction he straightway dismissed it from his mind.

His reflections upon this subject had so preoccupied his mind that he had reached the corner of Grand and Baxter streets almost unconsciously, but the turnings that led to his present home were so familiar to him that his feet took that direction almost of their own volition.

Clustered on the sidewalk in front of the dingy brick house, where he had found a shelter, and which was let in different apartments, like all the dwellings in the street, so that every house was a hive of humanity, was a group of noisy, ragged boys, engaged in a game of "marbles," and the noisiest and raggedest of them all was a diminutive youngster, who could not have been over ten years of age, though his face was as sharp and shrewd-looking as that of a man of forty. Indeed, he looked like one of those "changeable" children that we read of in Irish legends, where the body is that of an infant, but the face is that of a man.

No scarecrow in a farmer's field ever had more rags fluttering in the breeze than did this youngster. Looking at them you wondered how he ever got them on him, and having got them on, how he contrived to keep them there.

His principal garment was a coat, "a thing of shreds and patches." The collar reached above his ears, and the skirts reached down to his heels. The dexterity with which he could divest himself of this outer garment, and the facility with which he could assume it again, were feats that confused the mind of the beholder like the tricks of a skilled conjuror.

This question, which he mentally put to himself, puzzled Fergus' brain excessively. He could not answer it; he could not understand the action of the lady at all.

"There's Ragged Terry," commented Fergus, as he beheld the group. "He and his gang are playing marbles on our sidewalk again. Fleda will be after them presently."

Fergus chuckled to himself, paused, and watched the game. Presently a squabble arose among the boys, an uncommon occurrence even among better dressed boys than they were, and Ragged Terry was accused of cheating.

He resented the accusation indignantly, whipped off his ragged coat, shedding it at his feet with surprising quickness, and revealing a ragged waistcoat, and the most dirty and dilapidated shirt-sleeves that the imagination can conceive, and offered to fight his accuser, throwing himself into a boxing attitude in a most ferociously ludicrous manner.

"If you says I cheats—come and see me, Cully!" cried the ragged manikin, shrilly.

But this invitation proved too belligerent for the other boy, though he was twice the size of Terry, and he admitted that he might have been mistaken, though his manner indicated that he did not think so, but that Terry's appeal to arms had forced him, to use a boyish phrase, "to back down."

"I thought you'd think better of it," said the triumphant Terry, and he prepared to resume his coat.

Watch him now as he picks it up from the sidewalk. There are as many holes in it as a cullender. How can he possibly get his arms into the sleeves? How can he tell where the arm-holes are among all those gaping rents? Look, he gives it a shake, makes a dive at it with his little head, the skirts describe a kind of somersault over his shoulders, his body writhes for a moment, and the skirts hang dangling at his heels. It is on. Ragged Terry is himself again.

The game is resumed, and more noisily than before; there is a perfect babble of oaths, shouts, and cries. Then a window in the third story is gently opened, and a small, curly black head is cautiously protruded. A pair of bright, black eyes survey the noisy group below, and then a tin kettle, of three quarts' capacity, is reached forth and turned upside down, and the head and kettle disappear quickly within the window.

Swish-swash! down comes the water in a deluge on the boys. Just at that moment their heads were all together, for Ragged Terry was "knocking down" for a shot and a strong suspicion that he will cheat pervades his chums, for Terry's propensity is well-known to them, and none escape the exterminating shower-bath.

They hastily gather up their marbles and scamper over to the other sidewalk, where they cluster together, shake the drops from them, wondering where they came from, and swearing like pirates—and pirates and robbers they will undoubtedly grow up to be, and the trial of one of them, for the inevitable crime he must commit, will cost New York more than to take the whole of them, just as they are now, and educate them in some reform school.

"That's Fleda, and she has ducked them," cried Fergus.

Ragged Terry was about to take off his coat and defy some one to fight, but he desisted when he saw Fergus.

"Sides, Cullies!" he said. "There's bully Fergie, the Fearnnaught."

CHAPTER V.

A SPRIGHTLY GIRL.

"Be off!" exclaimed Fergus. "You have

no business here—and you have been told so often enough."

"You're blown!" cried Terry, defiantly.

"You don't own the street."

Terry, however, was careful to keep at a safe distance while he made this remark, watching Fergus keenly with his twinkling eyes, which were as sharp and as bright as those of a mouse.

Fergus made a feint to cross the street.

"Mizzle!" cried Terry, warningly. "He's acomin' fur us!"

And the ragged crowd scuttled rapidly away, following the lead of Terry.

Fergus laughed as the boys scampered away, and then turned and entered the house. In the hall he met a girl holding a tin pail in her hand. She had just come down stairs.

"Hallo! Ferge!" she called out to him, in a shrill, clear voice. "Just come?"

"Yes."

"Did you see what I did?"

"Oh, yes."

" Didn't I duck 'em good?"

" You just did."

The girl broke into a merry laugh, the mirth coming as spontaneously from her lips as song from the throat of a bird.

"I knew I could make them scatter, and a little water won't hurt any of them," she said. "I guess that little ragamuffin Terry once had his face washed, good and clean, his own mother wouldn't know him—that is, if he has a mother," she added, with a reflective shake of the head.

"Hasn't he got a mother?" inquired Fergus, with sudden interest.

"Guess not—anay way, I never heard of any."

She opened the door that led into the apartment on the ground floor, stepping down a step to enter it, and Fergus followed her, closing the door after him.

This apartment was the principal and largest one of the three occupied by Mrs. Nandrus, the girl's mother, who had taken Fergus to board. It was very scantily furnished, but was kept scrupulously clean, and it combined the offices of sitting-room and bed-chamber, for there was a bed in the further corner of the room, covered by a milk-white spread. Indeed, a general air of tidiness pervaded the room.

Though the carpet was of the commonest ingrain, not a speck of dirt could be detected upon its surface, and the little chintz sofa, and the table and chairs were free from dust.

The room, however, was not very cheerful, despite the care devoted to it. The floor was considerably below the level of the sidewalk. The two windows opened upon a little area two feet below the sidewalk and separated from it by an iron picket fence.

This gave the room a kind of dungeon look, gloomy and oppressive, until one became accustomed to it. Looking out to the street from the windows through the bars of the iron fence was like gazing through the barred window of a prison cell. But Fergus had been too thankful for the shelter he had found there in his hour of need to take any thought of its gloomy aspect.

Besides this girl had brightened up the place to his view wonderfully. She was as merry as a cricket, and as mercurial in her actions as a butterfly. It was she that had taken Fergus in, pleased at

She found him very non-communicative at first, however—shy and suspicious even of her. He told her his name was Fergus. “Fergus what?” she questioned. He did not know; up country, where he came from, he had been called Fergus, but nothing else. Fleda considered this very strange, and so did Fergus then, though he had given it very little thought before.

“You ought to have another name,” she told him. “Everybody has two names.”

“I suppose so,” answered Fergus, indifferently.

“If you don’t know what your right name is, why don’t you call yourself something else?” she suggested.

“Would you?”

“I would,” she replied, decidedly. Even in this first meeting she exerted an influence over his mind. The interest she took in him was a pleasant novelty to the friendless waif; no wonder he paid heed to any suggestion coming from her lips.

“I don’t know what name to take,” he said, after some deliberation.

“Don’t you?”

Thus appealed to, Fleda set her wits at work, and they were very sharp ones, as will be demonstrated as we go on in the narration of the story before us.

“I’d have a nice name while I was about it,” she said. “My first name is nice, but my last name is just awful.”

“Is it? What is your name?”

“Fleda Nandrus.”

“Fleda? That’s a funny name. Why did they call you Fleda?”

“Because I was as lively as a flea when I was a little thing, I suppose,” answered Fleda, with gravity; “leap-saws, mother says so.”

“I think it’s a good name.”

“So do I; and the last name don’t matter much, because I can change that one of these days, you know.”

“Change it?” inquired Fergus, in some surprise.

“Of course,” replied Fleda, complacently.

“How so?”

“When I get married,” answered Fleda, demurely.

“Oh!” ejaculated Fergus. “I never thought of that.”

“But you must select a good name, because you can’t change it,” she continued. “Let me see, what shall it be?” she added, reflectively.

“I’ll take any name you’ve a mind to pick out,” said Fergus, rather pleased to be spared the trouble of choosing for himself.

“You’re awful brave!” cried Fleda, “and you ought to have some name that would tell people so—something that would sound nice.”

“They called me a young ‘daredevil’ at the almshouse. How would that do?”

Fleda gave a little scream of dismay.

“Dare devil! Good Lord, no!” she cried.

“That would never do. You are not afraid of anything, are you?”

Fergus gave his head a proud toss that floated his flaxen hair, something after the fashion of a lion throwing back his mane.

“Not much!” he answered. “I don’t scare worth a cent. I stopped a runaway horse the other day, and the gentleman that owned him gave me a dollar, and told me I was a ‘fearnaught,’ whatever that is.”

Fleda clapped her hands delightedly together.

“That’s it!” she exclaimed.

“What’s it?” inquired Fergus, in bewilderment.

“The name!”

“Eh?”

“Fergus Fearnought!”

“Who’s he?”

“You. Oh, isn’t it just splendid?”

And so she gave him his name—a name that he was destined to bear through long years of varied adventures and experiences such as fall to the lot of few mortals.

It is well that the “Book of Fate”—as it is called—can never be perused by human eyes, charlatans and fortune-tellers to the contrary, for few men would have the fortitude, knowing the inevitable suffering and sorrow they must undergo before they reach that haven of rest, the grave, to go on with life.

“You don’t think Ragged Terry has a mother?” asked Fergus, following up their theme of conversation as he and Fleda entered the room.

“I never heard of his having any,” she replied.

“He’s a good deal like me, then.”

Fleda tossed back her tangled curls and sniffed the air contemptuously with her small but well-shaped nose.

“Like you?” she cried. “Not a bit of it! Why you’re a king to him! He’s nothing but a snip!”

“He’s a cute little cuss, though,” returned Fergus. “You ought to see him begging in the Bowery, as I have. I tell you what, he’s smart at it. That ragged coat of his just brings the pennies fast.”

“I have no doubt of it; but what good do they do? Why don’t he save ‘em, and buy himself a new coat?”

“He wouldn’t get so many pennies in a new coat,” answered Fergus, shrewdly. “He looks so ragged that people take pity on him. He’s up to the dodge.”

“He’s up to all sorts of mischief, I know, but I’ll stop his coming here, and howling in front of my windows, if I have to duck him every day in the week.”

“That was a cute dodge of yours, Fleda,” returned Fergus, laughing over the recollection of it. “They couldn’t tell where the water came from.”

“I’ll warn it for ‘em, and give it to ‘em hot the next time!” cried Fleda.

Her animosity against the boys appeared to be very strong.

“Oh! I wouldn’t do that,” remonstrated Fergus. “I wouldn’t scold the poor cusses.”

“I’m sure they deserve it!”

“Pr’aps they do; but that would make ‘em mad, and they’d throw stones and break all your windows.”

Fleda felt the force of this remark; such a retaliation would be unpleasant.

“Pr’aps they might,” she admitted. “But they are a dreadful nuisance. Oh! I do wish that we could move away from this neighborhood! There’s nothing but beggars and thieves around here.”

“But there’s none in this house!” cried Fergus quickly.

Fleda’s black eyebrows were arched in a very expressive manner.

“Oh! isn’t there?” she rejoined. “Don’t you be too sure of that! What’s that tall man, who lives on the upper floor, who’s out all night, and home all day—John Jackson they say his name is, but who knows whether it is or not? Who knows anything about him, or what he does, anyway?”

“Why, you don’t mean to say that he is—”

Fleda clapped her hand quickly over Fergus’ mouth.

“Hush!” she cried, warmly. “He might be going through the hall and overhear us talk-

ing about him, and come in here to-night, when we are asleep, and wring both our necks for us.”

“I would like to see him try it!” exclaimed Fergus, defiantly.

“Would you? Well, I wouldn’t! You’re brave enough, I know, but he’s a big man, and you’re only a boy. I got a glimpse at his face one evening as he was going out, and he looked as savage as a meat-ax. You’d better keep out of his way, I tell you. Why, he’d think more of twisting your head off than if you were a poor, innocent chicken.”

“He’ll find me a tough chicken, if he troubles me!” cried Fergus stoutly. “I ain’t afraid of any man’s black looks. But, never mind him; he won’t trouble us if we don’t trouble him. Where’s your mother?”

“This is one of her days out, and she hasn’t got home yet. You didn’t come home for any dinner. Where have you been all day?”

“Down by Cortlandt ferry.”

“Did you get any jobs?” inquired Fleda, with interest.

“Yes, two.”

“How much did you earn?”

“Fifty cents.”

“Oh, my! but you have been lucky to-day!” she exclaimed, delightedly.

“I just have. I carried a valise for a gentleman up to French’s Hotel, and he gave me a sandwich he got coming on the train and didn’t eat, and that made my dinner; and when I got to the hotel there was a gent just ready to go to the ferry, and he had a carpet-bag he wanted carried, and so I cut it both ways—got a quarter from each. So I let the boys black my boots, just to show how flush I was.”

“Lord, what extravagance! Your pride will be the ruin of you yet, Fergus.”

She shook the forefinger of her right hand at him, reprovingly.

CHAPTER VI.

FLEDA’S BRIGHT IDEA.

FERGUS laughed at Fleda’s reproof.

“Guess not?” he returned, lightly.

“I like to spread myself a little when I get a chance. What’s the use of being a fellow unless you are some of a fellow? Ah, wouldn’t I like to be as well off as Clint Stuyvesant! He’s the boy that can put on the frills, and starch ‘em up to the nines, too!”

Fleda opened her bright black eyes widely at this egotistic speech.

“Clint Stuyvesant?” she cried. “Why, who’s he? I never heard you speak of him before.”

Fergus laughed again. The perplexed look on the little maiden’s face pleased him highly.

“Guess not, for I never saw him until today,” he answered. “It was a regular muss he and I had with one of those maccaroni chaps—padrones they call ‘em—that send the little Ettalian boys out to fiddle in the streets.”

“Why, how was that?”

This question led Fergus to explain how he had made the acquaintance of that scion of the Knickerbockers who bore the sounding and time-honored names of Clinton De Witt Stuyvesant.

Fleda shook her young head gravely as she listened to Fergus’ account of his adventure. It did not appear so funny to her as it did to him.

“You’ll get killed yet, Fergus, see if you don’t!” she exclaimed.

“Not a bit of it. What’s the use of living if you don’t have some sport?” he returned.

Then he broke into a song, which was popular among the boys, singing a snatch of it with surprising sweetness and melody:

“So let the wide world wag as it will,

I’ll be gay and happy still;

Gay and happy—gay and happy—

I’ll be gay and happy still!”

Fleda found this gayety infectious, and joined in the chorus with a will. Then they indulged in a little dance together, until Fleda got tired and sunk breathlessly into the old rocking-chair.

“Oh! what a boy you are, Fergus!” she cried, as soon as she got breath enough back to him.

“And what a girl you are!” he returned.

“Then there’s a pair of us!”

“And we ought to make something out of this ‘wide world,’ as the song says.”

“We will,” she answered, springing to her feet with animation. “I have been thinking of it for some time.”

“You have?” questioned Fergus, with interest.

“What is it?”

“I’ll tell you. I don’t want to have to earn my living the way mother does—it’s awful hard to do washing—you know how tired she is when she comes home after a day’s washing?”

“Yes; and I’ve often wished I could help her in some way; but a young fellow like me can’t do much, you know.”

“I think we could do something—you and I together, Fergus.”

“What?”

“How much money have you got left?”

“Forty cents. Here it is.” He thrust his hand into his pocket. “Oh, by jinks! I had forgot all about that. See here, Fleda, I’ve got a present for you.”

He drew forth the handkerchief and exhibited it to her as he spoke.

She looked at it in a very suspicious manner.

“Oh, my! what a nice handkerchief!” she exclaimed. “But oh, Fergus, I hope you didn’t steal it!”

Fergus’ face became crimson at the question.

“Steal it?” he cried. “Did you ever know me to steal anything yet?”

“No, I never did; and I hope you never will!”

“Guess not. I found it.”

Fleda breathed a sigh of relief.

“Found it?” she said.

“Yes, in the Bowery; I thought I saw the lady who dropped it, and when I ran after her, to give it to her, somebody behind me sung out ‘Stop thief,’ and I had to cut my lucky. I knew they’d take me for a thief, anyhow, if they caught me, and so I dusted out of the crowd, lively. They don’t give a poor chap a show if anything bad is brought against him.”

“But couldn’t you find the lady, afterward?”

“No; they kicked up such a rumpus around me that I lost sight of her. And I felt a little mad, too, to think they should take me for a thief, when I’ve always tried to be honest; and when I’ve been half-starved, many and many a time, I’ve found it pretty hard to keep my hands off other people’s property, I can tell you.”

“Yes, I know; it’s awful trying. But I wish you had found the lady.”

“So I would if they had let me alone. But I wasn’t going to be took up for a thief when I knew I wasn’t one.”

“Of course not,” said Fleda, sympathetically.

“Besides, finding’s having, you know.”

“Well, yes, I suppose it is,” Fleda admitted, slowly, as if some little doubt upon the subject lingered in her mind.

“You’ll take the handkerchief?”

“I suppose I may as well,” answered Fleda, receiving the gift, and examining it critically.

“Well, it isn’t such a great affair, after all,” she continued, and her nose gave that peculiar cant upward that was so expressive with her. “You could buy any quantity of them for twenty cents apiece. I’ve seen them marked for that hanging out in the Bowery and Grand street.”

“Then it couldn’t have belonged to her,” cried Fergus.

“Her—the lady?”

“Not that lady—but another one.”

“What lady?”

“Such a

they are not themselves at all, but somebody else."

"May I ask the name of the gentleman whom I have the honor to resemble? I hardly think, Miss Lawless, we will turn out to be relatives, as I have not one in the wide world," said Captain Reginald, with something like a cloud settling on his dark face.

"My name is Raymond Germaine," said Ray, coldly.

"Germaine!" exclaimed the smuggler, starting suddenly and paling slightly, "did you say Germaine?"

"Yes, sir; what is there extraordinary in that?" asked Ray, who still encircled Pet.

Captain Reginald did not reply, but paced abruptly up and down the floor for a few moments. All were gazing at him in surprise; but there was fierce suspicion in the dusky depths of Marguerite's black eyes.

He came back at last, and resuming his former posture, said, but no longer in his cold, sarcastic tone:

"I once knew a person of that name, and its utterance recalled strange memories. It is not a very common name here—may I ask if you belong to this place?"

"No; I am English by birth, but I have lived here since a child."

"English?"

He started wildly again, and this time looked at the young man in a sort of terror.

"Yes—or rather, no; for though born in England, I am not English. I come of another race."

The fixed glance of the smuggler's eyes grew each moment more intense, his dark face paled and paled, until, contrasting with his jet-black hair and beard, it looked ghastly. His breath came quick and short as he almost gasped:

"And that race is—"

"The gipsy! Yes, I am of the degraded gipsy race," exclaimed Ray, with a sort of pride, as though he dared and defied the world to despise him for that.

The smuggler-captain reeled as though some one had struck him a blow, and grasping Ray by the arm, he exclaimed, in a low, husky whisper:

"Tell me who brought you here. You were a child, you say, when you left England—who had charge of you?"

"My grandmother—a gipsy! What in the name of heaven, sir, is all this to you?" exclaimed Ray, like the rest completely astounded by this strange emotion.

"Her name?" said the outlaw, hoarsely, unheeding his question and the wonder of the rest.

"Among her tribe she was known as the gipsy-queen, Katura."

"Just God!" exclaimed the smuggler-chief, as his grasp relaxed and with a face perfectly colorless, he stood like one suddenly turned to stone.

"Sir, what under heaven is the meaning of this?" said the bewildered Ray, while the rest looked on almost speechless with astonishment.

There was no reply. The outlaw had leaned his arm on a sort of mantel, and, with his head dropped upon it, stood like one stunned by some mighty blow. All were white and mute with wonder.

He lifted his head at last, and they started to behold his dreadful ghastliness. His eyes for some moments were fixed in a long, inexplicable gaze on the surprised face of Ray, then, in the same, low, hoarse tone, he asked:

"And she, your grandmother—does she still live?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"In Old Barrens Cottage; but she is a helpless paralytic."

"So near, so near! and I never knew it. Great Heaven! how wonderful is thy dispensations!" he groaned.

"Is it possible you knew her?" asked the bewildered Ray.

"Yes, I knew her," he replied, slowly. "Tell me, did she ever speak to you of your father?"

Ray's brow darkened, and his eyes filled with a dusky fire.

"She died—often. My father was drowned! He was branded, tried, convicted, and condemned for the guilt of another. His day of retribution is to come yet! Enough of this—I cannot understand what possible interest all this can have for you."

"You will soon learn. Come with me; Miss Lawless, remain with my wife until my return. This way, young man," said the outlaw, turning to the inner apartment and motioning the other to precede him.

The astonished Ray did so, and the curtain fell between the wonder-struck assembly outside and the twain within.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE OUTLAW'S STORY.

"They did not know how hate can burn. In hearts once changed from soft to stern, all the false and fatal seal.

The convert of revenge can feel."—BYRON.

"Be seated," said the outlaw, with a wave of his hand.

Silent and wondering, Ray obeyed.

His strange companion walked across the room, and for some moments stood with knit brows and downcast eyes, like one absorbed in painful thought. Then he began pacing up and down, while Ray watched him, inwardly wondering whether this half-smuggler, half-pirate captain was quite right in his mind.

He stopped, at last, in his quick, excited walk as rapidly as he had commenced, and facing round to where Ray sat, demanded:

"Why did my—this gipsy, Katura, leave England?"

"I do not know—she never told me," replied Ray.

"Old Earl De Courcy died shortly after I, her son, left England—perhaps she was instrumental in his death and was obliged to fly."

"Or that I know nothing," said Ray, impatiently. "What has all this to do with the revelations you are to make?"

"Not much, perhaps; but I wish my question answered. You say she resides in Old Barrens cottage?"

"Yes."

"You live there too, with her, of course?"

"Yes."

"If she is, as you say, a helpless paralytic, how has she contrived to support and educate you—for I perceive you are educated?"

"It was not she who did it. I am indebted for my education to the kindness of an old gentleman who resides near us," said Ray, flushing and biting his lip till it was bloodless.

"Who attends to her now, in her helplessness?"

"Erminie and her servant."

"Erminie who? Oh, I remember; Miss Lawless spoke of some Erminie Germaine, who was to have been brought here instead of her. Who is this Erminie?"

"I cannot tell. My grandmother brought us from England together—she was a mere infant, then."

"Perhaps she is your sister?"

"No; her very looks forbid such a supposition. That there is no gipsy blood in her veins, I am confident."

"And gipsy Katura brought her from England? Strange—strange! Who can she be?" said the outlaw, musingly. "She has often spoken to you of the De Courcy family, no doubt?"

"Yes, often."

"Did she tell you Lord Ernest Villiers married Lady Maude Percy?"

"She did."

"Do you know if they had any children?"

"I do not know."

"She never told you?"

"Never," said Ray, wondering where this "Catechism of Perseverance" was to end.

"Strange, strange—very strange!" said the outlaw, pacing up and down, with brows knit in deep thought. "And so you are determined to avenge the wrongs of your father, young man?" he said, after a pause, stopping before him.

"Yes, Heaven helping me, I will!" exclaimed Ray, fiercely.

"Heaven!" said the outlaw, with his old sneer. "It is the first time I ever heard Heaven aided revenge; Satan helping you, you mean. And how is this revenge to be accomplished?"

"Time will tell," said Ray, impatiently.

"It cannot concern you in any way, Captain Reginald; and on this subject you need ask me no more questions, for I will not answer them."

"As you please," said he, with a strange smile. "You have inherited the fiery, passionate spirit of your race, I see. Your father is, you say, drowned?"

"Yes—yes! To what end are all these questions?"

"Patience, Mr. Germaine; I will come to that presently. Did your grandmother ever speak to you of your mother?"

"Very little," said Ray, in a softer tone.

"She told me she never saw her, but that she was a lady of rank. That, however, I am inclined to doubt."

"And why?"

"Because my father was a gipsy. No lady of rank, knowing it, would have anything to do with one of his class. Proud England's proud daughters would not mate with despised gipsies."

A streak of fiery red darted for a moment across the dark face of Captain Reginald, and then passed away, leaving it whiter than before.

"Love levels all distinctions, young sir," he said, haughtily.

"If she loved him would not that be sufficient to break through all the cobweb barriers of rank? Have not all social ties been proven, thousands of times, to be more flimsy than paper walls before the irresistible whirlwind of human love and passion?"

Ray thought of Pet, and his dark cheek flushed slightly. What a convenient belief this would be, dared he adopt it! He loved her, and thrilling through his heart came the conviction that she loved him. Would she, too, break down these "paper walls" for his sake? Would she give up all the world for him? As thousands had done before, according to this strange man's story?

"Your mother was a lady of rank—is a lady of rank, for she still lives!" were the next words, spoken rapidly and excitedly, that aroused him from his dangerous reverie.

"My mother lives!" exclaimed Ray, springing into his feet.

"Yes."

"Where?"

"In Old Barrens Cottage; but she is a helpless paralytic."

"So near, so near! and I never knew it. Great Heaven! how wonderful is thy dispensations!" he groaned.

"Is it possible you knew her?" asked the bewildered Ray.

"Yes, I knew her," he replied, slowly. "Tell me, did she ever speak to you of your father?"

Ray's brow darkened, and his eyes filled with a dusky fire.

"She died—often. My father was drowned!" he said, scornfully. "Do you take me for a fool, Captain Reginald?"

"Young man, before high Heaven I swear I speak the truth!" said the outlaw, solemnly.

"Did not Katura tell you the manner in which your father's marriage was brought about?"

"That he inveigled my mother into it by some unlawful means? Yes; she told me that. But, good heavens! the idea of it being Lady Maude Percy! Oh, it is absurd, ridiculous, incredible, impossible!" exclaimed Ray, vehemently.

"Did your father ever take part in these horrible scenes?" asked Ray, with a slight shudder.

"It is the truth!" replied the outlaw, emphatically.

"Your father had been a gentleman once, and his whole nature revolted against this brutality. No, he never joined these fearful revels, but he fought like the very fiend himself in open warfare, especially against the English ships. When they were attacked he was worth the whole pirate crew together. He fought, and cut, and clove, and slashed them like the devil and all his angels. Burning and smarting still under the sense of his mighty wrongs and degradations, he seemed determined to wipe out all his sufferings in their blood. These were worse crimes than murder committed, sometimes, by these human fiends; your father never took part in them, though he got over that and sundry other pleasant beliefs of late years. Though, whenever I saw them, I used to wonder if there was a deep enough pit in hell for these fellows. When I was young I used to believe in such a place. Mr. Germaine, doubt you do now; but somehow I get over that and sundry other pleasant beliefs of late years. 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THE SATURDAY JOURNAL

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THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE.

An Ode for St. Valentine's Day.

BY MICHAEL SCANLAN.

Rome, in her noon-tide splendor, bazaar but sublime,
Had flung her crimson glory over all the coming time,
And the nations sung submission when her standard
For her mighty march of conquest thrilled a subjugated world!

Then war, the iron-visaged, insatiate and grim,
Had drawn her adoration from all other gods to him,
Till the roar of wrecking armies rolled like music
To her ears.

Till her bosom knew not pity, till her fierce eyes
Knew no tears.

For theowering of her spirit had been blindly
Trodden down.

By war's remorseless legions who had crowned her
for their own.

As in a shepherd's bosom, so in the heart of Rome,
Through high above red carriage, Love had found a
vegan home;

Rocked in her giant passions, wrapped in her fierce
desires,

Drew beauty from her matrons, strength from her
sinew'd sires,

Then plucked the public homage from the front of
the, and wrung,

Submission from the despots, till his battle banners
hung

As trophies on Love's altar, while heralds sung
abroad

Through all the templed city, "Love is the great-
est god!"

The crowd hailed the omen, and a day was set
apart

When war should pay allegiance to the monarch of
the heart.

That day beheld Love gazing on the fair, uplifted
face

Of Rome, and the marble visage was lit with new-
born grace—

That visage battle-molded and seeming fixed as
A as the touch of pity had softened its lines of
face;

The flowers of her eager spirit, long crushed in her
battle gloom,

Now leaped to the genial sunshine and burst into
Full-blown bloom;

For Rome had newly risen to the high belief that
life

Had deeper and holier raptures than blood-consum-
ing strife—

She that had strangled pity and murdered mirth
With tears,

Rolled that day with laughter, and wept unblush-
ing tears.

Ha! to the trumpet crashes! now drowned in the
mighty wave

Of the world's voice proclaiming the god who has
come to save!

Under triumphal arches, past temples thrown open
wide,

While seas of soulful faces look homage on either
shore,

Ride heralds and war-gemmed legions, their wea-
pons buried in flowers,

And youths and lithe-limbed maidens, winged like
the flying hours,

Patrician plebeian bending, like thoughts in a peni-
tent's prayer;

All Prowess abroad to worship in the temple of sun
and air,

Anon comes the chariot of triumph, the victors
smiling above,

And War, in garlands wreathed, sits at the feet of
Love.

This was when the Roman in his young wolf-sight-
ed days

Tracked up the everlasting through war's mad and
blazing ways;

But time with wasting vision looked in the heart of
Rome.

And it crumbled into ashes, and temple, arch and
domes

Gaped into shapeless ruin; her altars were o'er-
thrown,

And here the world-consuming, live but in song
and stone—

The fierce, the blind, the lustful; things that up-
rose from clay

At the call of the heated passions and reveled for
a day—

But Love rose young, eternal, above the reach of
Time.

Above the wreck of empire, beyond the Roman
clime.

Not all the hoary legions that have lapped the
lands in flame;

That men might read in wonder some fratricidal
name,

Could keep the earth from blushing in her bridal
abodes of flowers,

Nor stamp out the affections from this throbbing
world of ours;

Their gods, the crimson haloed, were consumed by
their own lust;

The adored and the adorers are long-forgotten
Gods and men grow olden, but love is ever young;

To-day, as at creation, are his hymns of rapture
sung:

We clasp hands with the Romans as we set a day
apart

To crown him and proclaim him the monarch of the
heart.

Then comes the coming herald, the gentle Valentine,
Cull flowers of the affections to strew on Love's
fair shrine.

And come with songs of gladness, sweet peans of
old time,

Pure as the snow of Hecla, warm as the Roman
clime;

Swell, swell the living chorus by the rolling ages

"Though earth and time grow olden, still Love is
ever young,

Ever young and ever glowing, ever blessing while
being blest"—

So woe him, open-armed, oh, ye maidens of the
World;

With the beauty of the Grecian and the vigor of old
Rome;

Be your hearts his living temples, be your hearts
his dearest home.

The Men of '76.

Washington.

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

GEORGE WASHINGTON—venerated name!
One hundred years have not diminished but
added to the luster of his fame.

As time widens the space between us and
those days, when the tocsin of Liberty sounded
through the land, we see more clearly that
the hand of God was in it, for did He not raise
up great men to meet the mighty crisis?

Grandly looming up through the distance,
towers the great, wise and good Washington,
proper leader of that gigantic struggle for
freedom—the Moses of the New Dispensation,
which was to embody the Gospel of Liberty
and give to man the Government of the People.

Looking at him now, in the light of history,
and contrasting him with those great leaders
who molded the destinies of nations—Alexander,
Caesar, Charlemagne, Charles V., Napoleon—we
are more and more impressed with
his sublime character, for he alone of all
earth's conquerors sought not his own aggrandizement
but to give true freedom a permanent
abiding place, and to plant the True Republic
upon permanent foundations.

Washington was a Virginian by birth, and
by education a man of the people. He came
of an old and honored family—all of whom
seem to have been persons of solid worth and
substantial character, of the class denominated
"gentlemen"—landed proprietors. His great-
grandfather, coming from the North of Eng-
land—the sturdy, independent and intensely
Protestant portion of the realm, settled in Vir-
ginia in the year 1657. George, born in West-
moreland County, February 22d, 1732, was the
third son of Augustine Washington, but the
eldest of five children by his father's second
marriage. He received only a fair English
education, for in those early days the sparsely
settled country could support but few schools,
and "tutors" were the chief reliance of the
families of the "gentry."

From early years George was accustomed to
hardy and active exercise. Running, wrest-
ling, jumping, horse-racing, hunting, were the
pastimes and sports of the people—in all of
which he so excelled as to become a conceded
champion. Humorous stories are related of
his extraordinary strength, prowess and agility.
But in all, he was the gentleman—the
good-natured, affable and generous nature
which his serious after life toned down but
never obliterated.

Taking up the calling of surveyor, he passed
many weeks and months in running lines over
the then quite unsettled region lying along the
base of the Blue Ridge Mountains, and in what
is now the northern portion of West Virginia.
The qualities he developed induced Governor
Dinwiddie to make him a messenger to explore
the region around and north of what now
is Pittsburgh, where the French were establishing
forts and encroaching on British possessions.
This mission of great delicacy, hazard and ex-
posure was performed in the winter of 1753—
George being then only twenty-one years of age!
So well did he discharge this trust that
the next year he was made lieutenant-colonel
of a Virginia regiment, raised to resist these
French advances, and the colonel of the regi-
ment dying, George took full command, and
then commenced a military career which want
of space forbids us to follow. He made such
a splendid record that, when Braddock fell
(July 9th, 1755) in his ill-starred campaign
against the French forts on the north, at the
ambush near Fort Duquesne (Pittsburgh),
Washington assumed command and brought
the routed and demoralized army back to safety
again, and won the highest praise for his
splendid gallantry and military judgment.
The Governor of Virginia made him commander
of the colony's forces, and for three years
following he was actively in the field against
the French and Indians, in what is now called
"the old French War"—a struggle which
was alive with deeds of daring, adventure and
suffering.

Retiring from the army in 1758, he married
Mrs. Martha Custis, widow of John Park
Custis, and with his wife and two children
retired to his estate at Mt. Vernon, where the
war of the Revolution found him, pursuing
the peaceful life of a planter. Virginia sent
him as one of seven delegates to the "Con-
gress" of the colonies, called to assemble in
Philadelphia, in 1774, to consider the relations
with Great Britain.

In the first Congress he was a very influen-
tial member, as well as in the second "Continental
Congress," which met in Philadelphia, May 10th, 1775,
to consider the alarming situation and devise a
means of common defense. The battles of Lexington and Concord had
been fought in April, and the gauge of war
thrown down by Great Britain was accepted by
all the colonies; so that when this second
Congress met it proceeded at once to arrange
for united defense. John Adams, of Massa-
chusetts, indicated Washington as the proper
man to assume chief command of the provi-
ded-for "Continental Army," and on motion of
Thomas Johnson, of Maryland, he was nominated
for that high office. The ballot was *unani-*
mous, and the commission was issued June
15th, 1775—two days before the battle of
Bunker Hill.

How great must have been his merits that
this wise Congress should have confided to him
the tremendous trust of confronting all the
powers of Britain's tried armies and tested
generals! He never for a moment wavered; his
clear mind grasped the situation; its im-
mense peril to himself, his family and his es-
tate—it's awful responsibility and herculean
labor—he saw it all, and with a heroism not
born of enthusiasm, but of sublime conception
of duty, he accepted the trust, and, refusing
all pay for his services, he stepped into his
office—the center of observation of the world,
and holding in his hands the destinies of three
millions of people.

To follow Washington through the eight
years of military service which succeeded, is
far beyond the limits of any mere sketch.
Volumes have been given to the glorious rec-
ord, and yet the story in its completeness is
untold, for the man was so calm, so steady, so
patient, soundaed, that little by little, as
the years pass, we begin to see him in a clear-
er light, and to fix his true position as a man,
as a commander, as a statesman and a sage.
From North to South he moved, the very im-
personation of an unconquerable will. De-
feat, disaster, disappointment, all were met by
that stern courage, which, undaunted even by
the dreadful rigors of the winter at Valley
Forge, compelled all to venerate the man, and
to sustain to the end a cause which gave them
such a leader.

And enemies—of course he had them. Did
ever greatness escape the penalty of defama-
tion, envy and distrust? Never! He who
takes the lead of men and masses must become
the target of skulking dastard and open di-
ractor. Washington, whose fame is now so
secure, was suspected, slandered, impugned by
a cabal in and out of Congress, but the pen-
etration of the patriots at the head of affairs
saved and sustained him—the end richly justi-
fying their steadfast faith in the chief.

In the spring of 1778 it was announced that
a preliminary peace had been signed in Paris
by plenipotentiaries of the three powers, Great
Britain, the United States and France; but it
was not until October 18th of that year, that
the American army was disbanded by order of
Congress. On November 25th the British
army evacuated New York, and the American
troops still in the service entered the city—
Washington at their head. Oh, what an ovation
followed! The people, wild with delight,
fairly worshipped the ground on which he trod;
but, even then, he was the same dignified,
calm, undemonstrative man as in his eight
years of weighty responsibility, for, with a
prescient eye, he yet looked ahead, and asked
himself the question: "What next?"

Yes, what next? The colonies were now
"free and independent States," but only States,
each with distinct interests, with limitless
powers for mischief and contention. Inde-
pendence had released them from all foreign
control, but what would now come in its wake?

December 4th, 1783, Washington took leave
of the army in New York, amidst an immense
public gathering—most affecting and impos-
ing incident; and, proceeding to Annapolis,
Maryland, where Congress was then in session,
he formally resigned his commission to that
august body, and retired to Mount Vernon,
the most admired and best beloved man in the
world!

What were a scepter and crown to such
glory! This Congress of Delegates continued,
in adjourned sessions, until 1787, when it became
evident that something must be done to
save the States from drifting apart and forming
dangerous and inimical coalitions. Local
and sectional jealousies, rivalries in commerce
and settlement; impending separate State
treaties with foreign powers; necessity of dis-
charging the continental debt, the acquisition
of territory to the west—all arose like so many
warnings of danger, and a convention of all

the States was called, to meet at Philadelphia
on the second Monday of May, 1787, to remodel
and perfect the scheme for a Union of all the
States under a common Constitution and au-
thority.

To this convention Washington was appointed,
and upon its assembly was elected its presiding
officer. It remained in session all summer,
and resulted in the adoption, by it, of our present
Constitution (less it since added
"Amendments"), September 17th, 1787. This
was only slowly accepted and ratified by the
necessary majority of States, many of them
being very averse to a dominating central
power; and it was not until January, 1789, that
the first national election was held. The
Electoral College then chose him as its president
in February, and Washington was unanimously
elected as the first President of the United
States of America, and John Adams, of Massa-
chusetts, was elected Vice-President; but from
a delay in obtaining a quorum in Congress the
electoral college votes were not counted and
declared until early in April, on the 14th of which
month the General was informed of his election.

His journey from Mount Vernon to the
city of New York, the then chosen seat of
Government, was one grand ovation—a kind
of triumphal progress. Crowds flocked from
far and near to cheer as he passed, in carriages,
on his way. Committees and delegations re-
ceived him as their guest, and escorted him at
until other like bodies claimed him at their
boards; but, expressive as was this homage of
people along the route, the reception at New
York was so enthusiastic and spontaneous that
it needed no further ceremony to assure the
Republic. The formal inauguration took place
April 30th. At 9 A.M. of that day all the
churches in the city held divine service, and at
noon, with imposing ceremony, the oath of office
was administered in the balcony in front of
the Senate Chamber in the old Federal
Hall on Wall street (where the Custom House
now stands).

Thus auspiciously was our present Govern-
ment given form, life and effect, and, under
Washington's sagacious advice, for the succeed-
ing eight years the Republic took permanent
shape, and the United States, with marvelous
rapidity, became a power among the nations.

Retiring at the end of his second term,
Washington published his Farewell Address, a
document which, next to our Constitution, is
most revered and studied by people and law-
makers. While the Constitution is the law of
our liberty, the Farewell Address is the spirit
of that liberty, giving the correct interpretation
of that law; hence it will ever remain to us
a precious heirloom, without which Wash-
ington's incomparable gifts to man would have
been incomplete.

Retiring, in March, 1797, from office, he was
not permitted long to enjoy his serene reposo
at Mount Vernon, for in July, 1798, he was
again nominated commander-in-chief of the
American armies, in view of expected war
with France, and at once proceeded to the
work of creating the first national army and
putting it in effective condition. No war fol-
lowed, however, through the sober second
thought of the French Directory, and Wash-
ington, who had not yet been compelled to leave
home, was permitted to enjoy his coveted rest.

Alas, for only a brief season, for on Decem-
ber 12th, 1799, taking a severe cold in riding
out over his farms, he grew gradually on the
13th ill, and after only a few hours' real sick-
ness, the strong man slept the sleep of death,
dying late on the evening of the 14th, the
symptoms closely indicating what is now
known as the dreaded diphtheria.

He died, for all intent and purpose, in
a night of starless darkness; yet, the wheels
went round and round with unerring precision,
impelled by a force no human power could
withstand—a force, against which neither light
nor darkness could avail; which would accom-
plish its work with tireless zeal, regardless
of woman's tears, a strong man's silent moans;
careless of the breaking hearts that crushed
souls, and oblivious of death.

It was one of the curiosities of this life-
drama that involved so many destinies, that each actor
and his part was unknown to the one most concerned.
It was one of its odd peculiarities—this strange tendency to secrecy, that no

ness in his eyes and a trembling in every limb as he realized that Ethel's influence was not yet gone from his heart. He drew the long list of names to him, almost savagely.

"I might as well begin. Read them, Ida, as I write."

She leaned carelessly against his chair, flushed and happy.

"Mrs. Argylema. You don't know her, do you? Neither do I, and cousin Georgia told me she did not. But cousin Theo requested an invitation for her especially. She is a lady he met in Europe and whom he greatly admires for her culture and refinement. She moves in the most exclusive circles in New York, and very probably you and I will visit her, some day, cousin Theo says."

He wrote the name, all unconscious of its fatal implication with his own.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 298.)

JACK RABBIT,

The Prairie Sport: OR, THE WOLF CHILDREN OF THE LLAND ESTACADO.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "OLD BULL'S EYE," "YELLOW-
STONE JACK," "PACIFIC PETE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

A LOVER ON THE TRAIL.

WITH heavy step and drooping head, a mustang toiled slowly through the dry, glistening sand. Its coat was rough and harsh with dried sweat and dust; its ears hung down, its tongue protruded like that of an exhausted dog.

Its rider was not in much better case. He, too, bore traces of long and hard traveling, if not of positive suffering. His dress was disordered, his face haggard, a wild, hunted expression filled his eyes.

Suddenly his gaze became fixed, and he involuntarily tightened the reins, the willing mustang halting in his tracks. Before him, until now hidden by a jutting spur of rocks, was a peculiar scene. Though fully a mile distant, every detail was distinctly visible in that rarified atmosphere.

A dozen dark shapes were moving to and fro, round and round a prostrate figure—the figure of a man lying upon the scorching sands near the edge of the rocky tract, still and motionless as though dead.

Nearer and nearer swooped the heavy-winged scavengers—the black vultures—their broad wings shadowing the body of the unfortunate, until one, bolder or more hungry than its mates, fairly settled upon the man's shoulders.

A sharp cry broke from the traveler's lips as he saw the vulture hurriedly rise from its perch, and with its mate, flap heavily away as though terrified. He saw the seeming corpse lift its arms and strike aimlessly around, then sink back once more.

With a wild, strange hope mingled with dread, the rider urged his mustang forward. His progress was slow, and the winged scavengers, as though resolved not to be robbed of their prey, settled down in a flock around the wretched, their sharp claws and powerful beaks quickly arousing the feeble spark of life, and the unhappy wretch fought desperately to defend himself.

A well-aimed arrow pierced one of the vultures through and through, and the traveler uttered a loud shout. With discordant cries and reluctant wings, the zopilotes abandoned the unequal contest.

Leaping from the saddle, the horseman stooped over the prostrate figure. Nearly naked, it was that of an Indian. From between his shoulders protruded the feathered shafts of two arrows. Other wounds were visible upon his side and broad breast, as though the arrows had been torn or cut out, the holes being rudely stopped with moss and grass.

A cry of recognition broke from the young man's lips as the large, bloodshot eyes met his own, and it seemed as though the remembrance was mutual, though the dying man vainly tried to speak. Instantly the traveler's water gourd was produced, and its last drops drained at the sufferer's mouth. Scant and tepid as was the draught, it proved sufficient.

"Don Leon," huskily gasped the tiger-hunter; "I saved your life once—you made me a promise."

"I did—I promised to assist you if ever you needed help."

"I claim it now—not for myself. My trail is ended—I've struck my last tigre—thanks to the coward hands—but listen."

In broken yet intelligible sentences, the dying man told his story; how he had met Rosina and Pablo—though he knew not their names—of their meeting with Black Garote, and his vain attempt to escape with Rosina's message.

"She said—tell Don Felipe Raymon—"

That was enough. Leon Sandoval interrupted him with a sharp cry, his eagerness so great that he could scarce wait for the answer to his questions.

The tiger-hunter had seen, even as he fell, bristling with arrows, the rude seizure of the brother and sister, and knew that the maiden's worst fears had been realized. For hours he lay as though dead, but finally recovered enough to drag himself along the hot sands, heading for the point of rocks described by Pablo, the counterpart of the one where they met Black Garote.

"Save her—that's all—I ask," gasped the tiger-hunter, his head falling back.

The end of his earthly trail was reached. Yet he had lived long enough to deliver Rosina's message.

Eager as he was to follow up the clue so strangely found, the young man restrained his impatience. Though, in common with all of his race, the Spaniard had been taught to consider the "civilized Indians" as of less value than the beasts of the field, Sandoval made an exception in favor of the tiger-hunter, and could not abandon even his dead body to the vultures.

With some difficulty the corpse was lifted to the saddle and conveyed to the rocks. There, in a little hollow, the remains of the tiger-hunter were deposited, a pile of boulders above the grave insuring it undisturbed repose.

Don Leon Sandoval was a far more important personage than the position he has been given in this chronicle would seem to indicate. The son of a wealthy *haciendado*—and a *rico* in his own right—he joined the buffalo-hunters, on probation, as it were. He it was of whom Rosina thought, during her wild ride, his face she expected to meet instead of that of Pablo. That they loved and were beloved, was no secret. Don Leon it was who left the wagon-train on the night of the storm, since that time he had been roving almost aimlessly through the desert, until, when hope was almost dead, he met with the faithful tiger-hunter, who lived just long enough to deliver Rosina's message.

Forgetting his own thirst and fatigue, Don Leon urged his jaded mustang on, following the broad, blood-stained trail left by the tiger-hunter. He had no definite plan in view; only to reach the spot where his heart was held captive. He knew little of Black Garote, but that little was enough to proclaim him an ugly customer, particularly with the odds in his favor.

Don Leon made but one halt on the way; at a little spring which gurgled from beneath a huge boulder, surrounded by a little patch of rich, succulent grass, very grateful to the hard-worked mustang, who greedily cropped while his master munched some tough *tasso*.

The sun was low down in the west when Don Leon first caught sight of the rude carts, the dolorous screeching of which had guided him for an hour or more. The buffalo-hunters were just going into camp, and when satisfied of this, Don Leon concealed his horse among the rocks and stealthily crept forward, bearing bow and arrow, knife and lasso, the latter clutched around his body in such fashion as not to interfere with his movements.

Though an ardent lover, a bold and skillful enemy, Don Leon was still cool-headed and far-sighted enough to see that a single false move might be fatal to all concerned. While cover was plenty, the danger of being discovered by some of the keen-eyed ciboleros when contrasted with the white rocks was such that it was full sunset before Don Leon gained a position within arrow-flight of the encampment.

His heart beat high as he distinguished the figure of Rosina, but the light quickly deepened in his eyes as he noted the self-possessed air of the huge half-breed, who was giving his ultimatum, before sending his captive into her tent.

While the buffalo-hunters were still engaged in eating, Don Leon made out the position occupied by Pablo, who was securely bound to one of the clumsy wooden wheels, in a sitting posture. His escape, unaided, was impossible; yet a cool, skillful man might hope to gain his side undiscovered under the cover of night. And while carefully marking out the best avenue of approach, Don Leon saw that the carreta to which Pablo was secured, contained several bows and sheaves of arrows, together with a rifle—the one captured with him.

Quiet at length fell over the encampment, and Don Leon saw that the moment for action was come. Leaving his covert, he glided cautiously forward. He knew that only one sentinel had been placed, and that upon the opposite side of the arena, or toward the desert. Unless some of the sleeping hunters were aroused, he believed that after freeing Pablo, they could steal away with Rosina, unobserved.

With a coolness and patience which few men can boast, Don Leon crawled nearer and nearer the camp, lying flat upon his stomach and only advancing by inches while out in the moonlight. More than once he paused and remained motionless for minutes, as some one of the sleepers moved restlessly, or turned over.

But then, gaining the deeper shadow, he could work more rapidly, and was soon close beside the prisoner. For a moment he hesitated, fearing that Pablo would betray all by some sound or outcry, but then he made out the youth's eyes gazing keenly upon him.

"Hiss—tis I—Leon," he cautiously whispered, as he applied his knife to the thongs. "For the Virgin's sake, be cautious!"

At any other moment, one or other of the train could scarcely have escaped seeing the dim, phantom figure which glided past the carreta, toward the skin lodge. As it was, the shadow faded away in the gloom, unobserved.

"Here—arm yourself," muttered Don Leon, as Pablo stretched his arms, free of the youth's eyes.

"Now is our time!"

"I would, only—the way is blocked up!" gasped Pablo.

For a moment Sandoval stood in silent horror, then gently lowering his burden, he sprang forward. But all was in vain. The defile abruptly ended in a high, almost perfectly smooth wall. They were in a trap—the pass was nothing more than a pocket!

They realized the full force of their discovery. They could retreat no further. Were the buffalo-hunters driven by the savages that the fugitives could only hope to escape through desperate fighting, as the defile narrowed down until two persons could not pass abreast. Were the whites victorious they would hardly omit searching such an apparently snug hiding place.

When convinced that further retreat was cut off, the comrades selected a spot, as well as possible amid the intense gloom, from whence they could hold at bay any enemy from without, and in low whispers discussed their chances of ultimate escape.

The cries and shouts from the mouth of the pocket had died away, and all was intensely, almost oppressively still. Then, for the first time since they left the encampment, a faint sound came from the captive for whom they had sounded so much.

In an instant Don Leon was by her side, gently calling her by name; assuring her that all was well. For a few moments there was no answer. She lay quiet in his arms, suffering his eager lips to dwell upon hers, as her consciousness gradually returned and her memory grew stronger.

"Rosina, darling, speak to me—tell me that you know me—your Leon," he murmured, his cheek pressed to hers.

"Who Rosina? me Paquita," came the quick reply, as the lithe form suddenly glided out of his arms. "Who—oh! I know now! Curse Rosina—me kill her, dead, dead, two, tree times over!"

The tones were little less musical than those Don Leon had expected to hear—but the words he started back in utter astonishment, for the moment, unable to realize the terrible mistake they had made.

Fortunately the woman had not yet comprehended the whole truth, else she might easily have escaped.

"Who you men? what you make wid me here?" cried the woman, her voice raising higher and more shrill as her excitement increased, until there was danger of her being heard by the enemy without. "What dis place—where dat woman—"

Pablo was the first to recover his senses, and springing forward he grasped the Indian woman, one hand firmly clasping her lips, just in time to stifle a loud shriek.

"Be silent—raise your voice above a whisper and by all the saints I'll kill you, woman or no woman!" he muttered sternly, as his choking grip gradually relaxed.

The woman seemed cowed and sunk to the ground with a low whimper. Had there been light, had she understood the whole situation, she would have acted differently. But it was all a mystery to her. The last she remembered was being in the tent, and now—where was she?

Don Leon drew closer to her, and spoke in a harsh, strained voice:

"There was a lady in the tent where we found you. What has become of her? Speak the truth, or—"

"Yes; me know," hissed Paquita, her superstitions fear vanishing before the mad jealousy that filled her bosom. "She white-face baby—she got love-weed in her mouth—when she speak. Garote got eyes only for her. He forget Paquita—tell white woman he love her—mus' hab for her wife! He say dis, an hear him, but he neber speak her so any more!"

The next moment, a hoarse, bellowing cry of furious rage filled the little valley with its echoes. A grating curse passed the tight-clenched teeth of Don Leon. He knew that

the truth had been discovered by Black Garote, who would spare no efforts to recapture his prey.

"On, Pablo!" he muttered, sternly. "Keep in the shade, and if they overtake us, remember that we are fighting for more than life—for your sister's honor!"

Burdened as he was, Don Leon kept pace with the young buffalo-hunter. Scrambling over or around the numerous boulders, they pressed on through the deep shadow, taking little heed to their course, hearing only the angry shouts and curses of the enraged cibolero, to which were now joined the shrill yells of the savages. Had the two bodies, so recently seeking each other's blood, combined? If not, then the fight had been renewed, and had turned against the buffalo-hunters, since the wild sounds were coming up the valley, right in the wake of the fugitives.

Don Leon paused for a moment, as if to assure himself of this fact, then spoke to Pablo.

"We must hide and let them pass by, then we can double and reach my horse. Watch for a covert."

Scarcely another hundred yards had been traversed, when the young cibolero sharply plucked Don Leon's sleeve and turned abruptly to the left, entering what seemed to be a deep, narrow pass through the high, rocky hills. The entrance was tolerably well screened by bushes, but the keen eye of the young hunter had caught sight of the divided rocks above, and reason told him the rest.

The fugitives only entered the defile for a few yards, then Don Leon resigned his charge for the first time, stealing back to the entrance with ready bow. The angry yells and shouts from down the valley came nearer, and he could tell that the buffalo-hunters were sullenly retreating before the savages, yet contesting every foot of the ground.

"If they only keep it up!" he mutters red, easily, glancing above his head, where the divided rocks showed so plainly.

There was little room for choice either way. Were the hunters pressed too hard, might they not seek refuge in the pass, where they could make a stout defense against ten times their number? Again, were the savages to abandon the fight, it was scarcely probable that Black Garote would submit to the loss of his captives without a thorough and systematic search.

Don Leon was not long kept in suspense. When nearly opposite the cut he heard the hoarse voice of Black Garote ordering his men to fall back into the opening, and only pausing long enough to catch a glimpse of the dark figures, Don Leon hastened back to Pablo, a curse upon his lips, a disagreeable foreboding busy at his heart.

"The dogs are coming in here," he muttered, with a sign for Pablo to be cautious.

"Pick your way with care—a misstep might be fatal. If they once suspect our presence here they will have us foul."

"They might run us down, but some of them wouldn't live long enough to crow over us," muttered the youth.

A few moments later the increased clamor—the fiercer shouts and more vindictive yells—that came along the defile, told the fugitives that the buffalo-hunters were stoutly defending the entrance.

"Make haste, Pablo," grated Don Leon.

"Now is our time!"

"I would, only—the way is blocked up!" gasped Pablo.

For a moment Sandoval stood in silent horror, then gently lowering his burden, he sprang forward. But all was in vain. The defile abruptly ended in a high, almost perfectly smooth wall. They were in a trap—the pass was nothing more than a pocket!

They realized the full force of their discovery. They could retreat no further. Were the buffalo-hunters driven by the savages that the fugitives could only hope to escape through desperate fighting, as the defile narrowed down until two persons could not pass abreast. Were the whites victorious they would hardly omit searching such an apparently snug hiding place.

When convinced that further retreat was cut off, the comrades selected a spot, as well as possible amid the intense gloom, from whence they could hold at bay any enemy from without, and in low whispers discussed their chances of ultimate escape.

The cries and shouts from the mouth of the pocket had died away, and all was intensely, almost oppressively still. Then, for the first time since they left the encampment, a faint sound came from the captive for whom they had sounded so much.

"I shd my good sense by riding away and washing my hands of the whole thing," he muttered, disgusted.

Disgusted with the farce, Jack rode back to the valley, and picking out his horse, strolled moodily around the rocky barrier, while Tony Chew kept close at his heels.

As he came opposite the crevice in the wall, Jack's face brightened, and entering, he closely inspected the "pocket." Though plainly disappointed in finding it "no thoroughfare," he evidently considered the discovery of some importance.

"We could play 'em a pretty stiff game from here, old man Tony. And yet—is it worth the powder? We can't open the eyes of those fools, and will only get barbed ourselves without doing any good—by staying here. Now, I'm not more of a coward than most men, but, honestly, I don't fancy the idea of getting rubbed out for a parcel of strangers."

"You have forgotten what I told you, then?"

"Slowly spelled the dumb man.

"That my whole future depended upon our joining this train; good enough as far as it goes, but I don't like to work in the dark," muttered Jack, discontentedly.

"It makes me nervous, though," laughed Jack, "ever since my experience with the Kiowas. It came about in this way. A party of us mountain men, made a treaty with Blue Bull, and he invited us to a feast. Only our leader suspected anything wrong, and he dared not tell us for fear of being laughed at and thought timid. After the feast there was a dance. The weather was hot, and we soon cast aside our weapons and extra clothing, the better to enjoy the sport. You can hear what I say?"

The chief nodded, though with an uneasy air, his hand nervously grasping the spear which was planted beside him. What was the meaning of this story? Was it only a coincidence?

"We didn't know it then, but we learned afterward, just how it all had been arranged. At a certain point in the dance Blue Bull was to arise and utter his war-cry, when his braves were to attack us—hal! you are ill!"

The chief shook his head, with an effort controlling his emotion. He saw that the critical moment was at hand. Only two more changes then he must give the signal.

"You started so I feared you were not feeling well. But my story. Blue Bull had a daughter, dear to him as the apple of his eye. Our chief knew this, and at the right moment he seized her—just as my

Happy Harry, THE WILD BOY OF THE WOODS;

OR,
The Pirates of the Northern Lakes.

BY OLL COOMES,
AUTHOR OF "IDAHO TOM," "DAKOTA DAN,"
"BOWIE-KNIFE BEN," "OLD HURRICANE,"
"HAWKEYE HARRY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE CABIN CONFLICT.

HARRY glanced around the room, an inward terror taking possession of him for a moment. A fire was burning on the great stone hearth, and some meat was broiling on a heap of coals. To him it was evident that the men had taken possession of the cabin and were helping themselves. But, where was old Davy? As he asked himself the question his eyes caught sight of a little pool of blood upon the floor. He also saw a track of blood leading from the pool across the floor into one corner, where there was a heap of straw and blankets used by the old trapper as a bed. There was a suspicious look about this heap, and as he eyed it closely the blood was almost frozen in his veins by sight of a bloody, moccasined foot protruding from the pile of blankets. It told a fearful tale; it was Davy's foot without a doubt! Those human fiends had murdered the old trapper and concealed his body there in the corner.

"You needn't stare around here, you dashed young rascal, tryin' to come innocence on me," burst from Mucklewee's lips. "It's me—the veritable ole Billy Mucklewee. You needn't think that you and that durned, or'nery, big dog of yours can outwit, outrun, oufight ole Billy. No, sir-e; I'd an ijee you'd cut out this way, and so I took wings and let out, too. You and your little elephant of a pup'll not slip me again. You're caged, my son, and you might as well drap your feathers."

"Murderer!" hissed the youth, with all the loathing scorn that he could throw into the words, "you ought to be quartered and fed to the wolves! You have murdered Davy Garrett, a harmless old trapper."

Involuntarily the murderer glanced toward the heap in the corner around which Belshazzar was sniffing inquisitively.

"Nobody'll miss him," replied the wretch, seeing that the boy had discovered his bloody crime; "and to cut matters short and end this talk, I'll tumble that old dog over by him," and he drew a pistol and cocked it. But, before he could fire, Happy Harry sprang behind the villain, and jumping on his back, clasped his arms around his neck so tightly that he was choked to the floor.

"Take 'em, Bell!" cried the lad, and the next instant the dog sprang upon the soldier.

"Into 'em, Harry!—sick 'em, Belshazzar—give 'em goss—rack it to 'em, the bloody hellions! Yoop! hurrah, for here's ole Davy good as a dozen dead men yet! Lap it to 'em, boys, and I'll lend a helpin' hand—hurrah for 'Hail Columbus'!"

Covered with blood and suffering with a number of severe wounds, old Davy Garrett had sprung from the heap in the corner and hastened to assist his young friend and Belshazzar.

Harry clung to Bill's neck like a monkey to a limb, and the old reprobate failing to dislodge him by rolling upon him, drew his second pistol, and was about to fire back over his shoulder into the boy's face when Davy came to the rescue. He struck the pistol from the villain's hand, and then dealt him a furious kick in the ribs that doubled him up like a twisted limb.

With a howling imprecation Mucklewee strove to spring to his feet, but before he could rise the trapper snatched up the villain's pistol and shot him dead!

Then over the fallen body, Davy Garrett extended his hand, saying:

"Shake, Harry, shake! God bless your blessed little soul; shake, I say!"

"Great hornits, Davy! I thought you were dead," replied the lad, extending his hand.

"I war mortal nigh it, and thought I'd play possum like you are in the habit of doing; but, Harry, for God's sake don't let that dog chaw that Englisher any more! The man's deader'n thunder, now. Call him off, Harry, call him off."

Harry called his dog away from the really dead soldier; then, white almost as a sheet, he turned to Davy and said:

"This is awful, awful business, Davy. It almost makes me sick at heart to think men become hunters of men, and butchers and kill one another."

"You're entirely too tender-hearted, Harry, my boy," replied Davy. "I don't see how you get along as well as you do. But then you'll git over this by'm'y. It's natural for a youngster to have a soft heart. I like to see a soft, kind and gentle heart when the right time comes, but then I want to see it stiffer and brace up when courage and firmness is wanted. You're that kind of a heart, boy; I know you. Brave are you when bravery's required; gentle and kind when gentleness and kindness is wanted. You must git over feeling bad about these two villains unless you're afraid their death will make times dull."

"I've had it lively for the past week, friend Davy," Harry announced, "and I must say that that dead watch lying there has been the cause of a good share of it all. But, Davy, do you know a regular ole war with England is goin' on now?"

"That tells me so," and he pointed to the dead soldier.

"And do you know that a big army of red-coats have crossed the frontier and are marching down this way?"

" Didn't know that, Harry."

"It's true, it is, for a startlin' fact; I camped with 'em last night by their earnest request enforced with a loaded musket. They'll be hereabouts about to-morrow noon, and maybe sooner, for I left them fellers at camp."

"Jewhillikins! you don't say, Harry?"

"I do, for a downright fact, Davy. I come by to tell you."

"Come by? whar ye goin'?"

"To general head-quarters of the American army in the north-west, which is at Detroit. I have a message, and the whole plans of the English general's proposed campaign, which I captured from a British major t'other mornin' in."

"You don't say you have these things, do you? Why, if that's so, it'll bu'st the Britishers' calculations all to smash. Gracious! yes, you want to get that news to Hull, and it'll be the makin' of you. You're a trump, boy, and ort to be made a general or a governor when you grow bigger. I'd walk a thousand miles to vote for you, Harry."

"Davy, are you goin' with me? or will you stay here?"

"Stay here!—stay here and git gobblled by the British? Nary stay; I'll shoulder my old rifle and peg out with you. I've not much

here to lose, and everything to gain. Yes, Sir Harry, I'll shoulder rifle and peg out for tall timber with you. I want to take a hand in this war, for I never expect to see another war in my time."

"I will be pleased to have your company, Davy; and I'd suggest that we get away as soon as possible, for other enemies may be near. But before we go, me and Belshazzar wants something to eat, if you've anything in your palace of the kind. We've fasted for a week, it seems like."

"Anything to eat? Why, just look thar, br'ilin' on them coals. My jolly, genial guests put me to bed and then went in on their nervous system. But, at me! how very uncouth I am. Now that they lay, and here I stand. Yes, Harry, we'll have a rousin' old supper, then set sail. Fust, let us drag these poor devils aside and cover 'em up; then, while I'm washin' up and puttin' on some clean buck-skin you amuse yerself, the best you can."

"I'll select a rifle from among our enemies' effects, as I was relieved of mine at the British camp last night."

"Do so, Harry—go ahead, make yerself right to home—indulge freely, partake of whatever pleaseth your fancy—be reckless as you please, for this is our last hour, p'raps, at the palace of ole Davy Darrett."

Harry examined the weapons of the soldier and Mucklewee, and, to his happy surprise, found the gun and accoutrements that he had been compelled to leave in Brock's camp. Mucklewee had substituted the elegant new rifle for his old flint-lock musket, little dreaming what a short time he was to possess it.

Old Davy soon washed the blood from his person and attired himself in a clean suit of buckskin from head to foot; then he set about preparing supper. This required but a short time, when they sat down and ate heartily.

When the meal had been finished some of the remnants were stowed away in a leather game-bag for future need, then the two took their departure for Detroit, Davy bidding farewell to the cabin as though it were an old time-honored friend.

It was dark by this time, at least it seemed so to our friends when they first plunged into the woods. The wilderness was droning into its monotonus song; but the sky was clear and starry, and the air cool and fragrant with the odors of the wildwood.

The two had journeyed but a short distance when the whinny of a horse suddenly broke through the woods. They came to a halt and listened. Not far away they could hear a sound, like a horse impatiently pawing the earth, mingled with the clinking of ring-bits and stirrups. Davy pressed his ear to the earth and listened long and intently, but could make out nothing further than the sounds indicated.

"By hornits!" exclaimed Harry, as a thought occurred to him.

"Now what, Happy?" questioned Davy.

"I hadn't thought of that before."

"Of what?"

"Of Mucklewee and the soldier havin' horses concealed near your cabin."

"You don't know yit that such is the case."

"No, but then it's possible. That noise is made by a horse pawing the ground and he must be hitched in there. Come along, and let us investigate the matter anyhow."

They crept softly forward and that pounding upon the earth ceased as they advanced, and was followed by a snorting, sniffing sound.

"Just as I told you, Davy," suddenly burst from Harry's lips; "here's two horses all saddled and bridled for us. Mount, Davy, and we'll ride down to Detroit; we will, for a square fact. Whoa, Prince! easy, now, ole steed," and he approached one of the restless animals and began caressing it. In a moment he had quieted its fears, then he untied it, and with but little difficulty mounted into the saddle.

Old Davy's horse was a little fractious, and as the old borderman had not been upon a horse's back for twenty years he deported himself somewhat awkwardly. With some difficulty, however, he finally got into the saddle, and then they resumed their journey.

Happy Harry could not refrain from an occasional outburst of merriment at the ludicrous figure of old Davy, doubled up and reeling to and fro on the animal's back like a monkey in a circus.

"Blast it, boy, why do you laff at me! A feller can't help gittin' scar—sick, I mean, on account of the vessel's motion. Jist wait till I catch the hoss's step, and then I'll sway edzactly right every time."

"You're top heavy, Davy; you are, for a fact."

"Ah, my boy! if you'd clumped around on foot as old Davy, you'd be top-heavy, too, under sich circumstances as these. But, never mind; I'll soon git ballasted, and then I'll show you a thing or two on hoss-back. It's not my fault that I'm reelin' around here; it's the hoss's fault; he won't walk square under me, that's what's the matter."

"You are like Jerry Jones when he got drunk and fell down. It wasn't on his account nor the liquor's, oh no, that he fell. He said that the earth was like an old wagon-wheel, and had lost its disk and got to wobblin' on its axis, and of course he couldn't keep his footin'."

"Well, Jerry wasn't fur from right," repeated Davy, affecting justification for his own awkward horsemanship.

They rode on as fast as the nature of the forest would admit, and about midnight struck the head-waters of a little creek flowing in a south-easterly course toward the Huron river.

"Do you know what stream this is, Davy?" Happy Harry questioned.

"It's Brownstown creek," replied the trapper. "It's bout twenty miles to its confluence with the Huron river, then it's twenty or thirty miles from there to Detroit."

"Can't we reach the fort without followin' the creek and river?"

"We can, yes; but then as it is night and the way uncertain and dangerous, we'll make time to stick to the water-courses as guides."

"All right, Davy; as you say," and they kept on down the stream.

They journeyed on until daylight, when they rode into the creek and watered their animals, then selected a grassy spot, drew rein and dismounted, to allow the animals to rest and graze awhile.

"Something wrong down that way, Harry," declared Davy, with a dubious shake of the head; "surely the British haven't got in ahead of us and been attacked by our sojers."

"Impossible; the army could not have moved so rapidly with their heavy guns and baggage-wagons. It may, however, be a de-

tachment of cavalry sent out in advance of the main column to reconnoiter. Or it may be a skirmish between the Americans and a band of Indians."

"We can soon find out by mountin' our critters and joggin' 'em briskly down that way."

"And we might jog into an ambuscade of Indians, too. A feller can't be too keerful, Davy, these war times. An Indian or Britisher is just liable to hop out of a bush as a wolf or deer, and we've got to feel carefully along."

"You know your busines, so go ahead, just as you think proper."

They finished their breakfast, mounted their animals and rode on down the creek. The imprint of horses' hoofs in the yielding earth suddenly arrested their attention; and upon careful examination of the ground they found that a large body of horses had passed down the stream. They also examined the tracks and found that they had been made by iron-shod hoofs. They found such a material difference in the shape of the shoe and that of the animals they rode, that they were led to believe a party of American horsemen had gone down the creek that morning. If so, they had fallen in with a band of savages, which accounted for the firing.

"What do you still counsel, Harry?" asked Davy; "had we better keep on down the creek, or bend off to the right a leetle?"

"Keep right on down the Brownstown. We may fall in with a party of friends, and be able to make ourselves useful."

"Just as you say, Harry. I'm in for anything that'll not disgrace the American eagle. Anything that'll shed glory on old Cumby, I'm in for."

They pushed carefully on, and finally entered an opening in the forest of perhaps forty acres in area. On the opposite side of this clearing the keen eyes of our friend caught sight of something fluttering in the air above a clump of bushes. It required not a second glance to tell him what it was.

A low, suppressed cry of delight burst from Harry's lips, while old Davy Darrett swung his cap aloft and shouted at the top of his powerful lungs:

"Hurrah for the star-spangled banner! the American eagle! and Hail Columbus, happy land!"

The sight of their country's flag waving so gracefully in the bright, morning sun, filled their breasts with renewed spirit and enthusiasm; and giving their animals the reins, they galloped forward.

Although they could see no one yet, they knew that beneath the folds of the flag they would be greeted by friends and American patriots with

"Freedom's soil beneath their feet,
And freedom's banner waving o'er them."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE OLD BORDERMAN'S TEST.

As Happy Harry and old Davy continued to advance toward the camp, a man, in the uniform of a captain of the United States army, rode out of the woods and halted them.

"Who comes there?" he demanded, in a stern-toned voice.

"Two doggone good American chaps," was old Davy's response. "I am ole David Darrett, hunter and trapper, and this're fractionally part of a man at my side is Happy Harry, the Wild Boy of the Woods."

"Advance, then," responded the officer. "You will report at once to Major Van Horne."

The two rode forward and were conducted into the timber where nearly two hundred mounted infantry were temporarily encamped. They were ordered to dismount at the edge of the camp, and while two men took charge of their animals, the captain conducted them to the commandant, whose quarters were under a low, branching tree.

Major Van Horne received them kindly. He knew them both by reputation, and so entertained no doubts of their loyalty. After having passed the usual compliments, the officer asked:

"What news have you from the north-west?"

"Notin' good, major," replied Harry.

"General Brock, with a lammin' big army, is in this territory, marchin' on Detroit, with old Tecumseh and his minions at his right. Fifty miles don't separate you from them this holy minute; it don't, for a fact."

"Can this be possible?" exclaimed the major, startled by the information.

"It's a fact, major; I war a prisoner in the camp of the British, nigh before last, and so I know what I'm speakin'. Before captured, I was an eavesdropper at an interview between General Brock and old Tecumseh, and heard 'em make their rangements. Oh, I tell you, major, it's goin' to be warm on the peninsula. They've gained admittance to the lakes with their boats, and, just a few nights ago, a party of us surprised and captured the little brig 'Scout,' with supplies for Brock's army. But then, major, this is not what I'm here for—in fact, I am not here for anything. I'm on my way to Detroit with some documents of great interest to the American arms."

"Ah, indeed! Is it possible that you are one of our spies?" asked Van Horne, in an unassuming tone.

"I don't know what you'd call me, but I'm an American boy, and fightin' for yonder flag. You see, I captured, or rather played a sly trick on a British major t'other mornin', and got from him the paper I am now carrying to General Hull."

"Do you think it contains anything that would be of interest to me, Harry?"

"Not a doubt it, major, for it is of interest to every loyal American; and I believe I'd better let you see it."

So saying, he pulled off his moccasin and with the point of his knife ripped a slit in the lining, from behind which he drew out a folded paper and handed

SOME FEET.

BY JOSEPH JR.

His feet they were so very large
That any one 'twould beat the man
Or the man belonged to the feet.
To make his shoes it always took
An endless amount of stock;
And he couldn't get them repaired unless
He took them down to the dock.
He was far more easily set on earth
Than any man in town;
And his feet all said it was impossible
To knock him down.
People would look at them and say,
With many laughing peals,
They never saw anything half so big
That didn't go on wheels.
Such large live things of course would have
A will of their own so strong,
Whenever they went a journey to go
They'd go and take him along.
'Tis said, although the man was short,
That when he laid in bed
The blankets were not long enough
To cover his feet and his head.
And when he started for any place,
Though manfully he did strive,
His toads would be there some minutes before
His body could arise.
And when the men would go by rail
To take a journey afar,
He'd sit behind on the last coach
With his feet on a platform car.
His feet took up so much of the streets
The citizens, fearful of harm,
Held an indignation meeting at last,
And advised him to move on a farm.
A singular thing about it was
And nevertheless quite true,
That the man's nose soon developed
The smaller than man grew.
At last that man gave up the ghost,
And here was the strange streak,
Although he laid there dead and cold,
His feet didn't die for a week!
And while they made his grave quite deep,
Two yards, or thereabout,
They saw with dismay that after all
His shoes had got out.
So to save his memory green,
As time on its journey rolls,
And to save the price of a marble slab
They chalked his name on the soles.

Darrel's Reward.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

"It's very annoying, to say the least. I am sure I do not see how it could have happened."

Mrs. Pontifex arched her handsome black eyebrows, and laid an arm around the shoulder of her son Darrel, a stylishly-dressed, imperious-faced boy of ten years, as if to ward off of his precious, exclusive person, any evil effects that might arise from the persons whose presence Mrs. Pontifex had expressed herself as being so "very annoying."

Darrel looked contemptuously at the two intruders into the sacred precincts of the inclosed grounds at Mildred Lawn.

"Mamma, I am sure they are thieves. They are gypsies, aren't they, and gypsies are always thieves."

Mrs. Pontifex straightened her elegant, portly figure, haughtily.

"We don't want anything of you. Leave the grounds at once."

The elder of the two, a tall, gaunt girl of Darrel's age, dropped a courtesy.

"We have come far, and have no money or food. Let me play, and Giulia will dance, and we will get a penny to buy bread."

"I tell you to leave the grounds at once, unless you wish to be put out. Darrel, my darling, do not go near them. They are not fit to be near decent people."

The smaller girl suddenly stopped in her dance, her great, solemn eyes, looking out from her dirty face straight into Darrel Pontifex's aristocratic countenance.

"Please—a penny—only a—"

Her low, timid voice was drowned by the gruff tones of the gardener, who had heard the twanging guitar from his greenhouses.

"Clear out of this, you pair of nuisances! Out with you, 'less you want the dogs on you! Master Darrel Pontifex."

But the boy's high tenor voice effectually overrid the man's.

"Mamma! don't I tell you they were thieves? See there—see what she's got—my silver buckle! I saw her watching a chance to grab it!"

The gardener caught little Giulia's slender arm.

"Come, now, drop it! don't let me catch you here again, either!"

And, kind-hearted at bottom, Jimmison would have let them go, but Mrs. Pontifex angrily refused.

"The idea of the little wretches daring to steal under our very eyes! Darrel, go to the office and tell your papa to bring a policeman here at once and arrest them. It will be a mercy to lock them up."

Giulia's dark face blanched with fear and rage.

"I don't steal! I don't know it on the grass till I tread on it! I don't steal anything!"

Mrs. Pontifex sneered insolently, and Darrel stopped to laugh maliciously before he sped off to the "office."

"Giulia never steals, lady; don't lock us up—see, you have your silver—we will go and never come again."

The elder girl took the smaller one's hand protectingly, and slung her battered guitar over her shoulder.

"Jimmison, they are not to go. I shall have them arrested as vagrants and thieves."

And five minutes later a strong, blue-coated policeman detailed for special duty at the magnificent country seat of Jeffrey Pontifex, was dragging the children rudely along. One, the elder, with compressed lips and flashing eyes, the other, little Giulia, crying and resisting with every trait of her little bare feet on the dusty road.

And Mrs. Pontifex and Darrel, in his elegant costume of navy-blue velvet and solid pearl buttons, watched them away without a misgiving.

"Will I do, think you, Antonia?"

A more bewitchingly piquant face was never lifted for commendation than was raised to the dark eyes of Antonia Vincenza—a face over which the radiant smile dimpled in rapid, happy succession; a face full of light and shadow, from the magnificent eyes, black as polished ebony, with heavy, curling lashes, and brows that were an exquisite arch, to the small, rosy mouth, that seemed made more especially for a lover's kisses than aught else.

Antonia looked frankly down in the girl's radiant face.

"My darling, you are, as usual, past criticism. It seems to me every new costume you wear is more brilliantly becoming than the last, but to-night, Giulia, you are positively glorious."

A little, low laugh came rippling from the girl's scarlet lips.

"You are almost as great a flatterer as Mr. Darrel Pontifex, dear. He swears by me, I believe."

A sudden dark cloud spread over Antonia's face.

"I cannot bear to hear that name, Giulia. The remembrances of it, and all that followed, are as fresh to-day as fifteen years ago. The only mystery to me is how you became acquainted with that man, and why you encourage him as you do. You know he will never marry you, dear."

A frown black as her own eyes, then a burst of sunshiny laughter from Giulia.

"You dear, good sister! Why don't you say I never will marry Mr. Darrel Pontifex? Wait and see—that's all; and now for fresh laurels to-night!"

And Antonia watched the radiant face away, and turned with a long, bitter sigh to her book.

A tiny, octagon-shaped morning-room, hung with folds of rare rose-silk, toned down by cobwebs of lace; delicate rose-plush furniture, that had been selected with especial regard to Mrs. Jeffrey Pontifex's brunet complexion; and Mrs. Jeffrey Pontifex herself, in elaborate breakfast-toilet, standing beside the small laid table in the center of the apartment, looking with grieved, half-indignant expression at the handsome, rather dissolute young gentleman lounging in a chair beside the open fire.

"It is simply preposterous, Darrel," she was saying, energetically. "The idea of anyone refusing to marry you—and particularly the girl who is nobody but a public singer! Why she may thank her luckiest stars you have so honored her. Refuse you, indeed?"

"Ridiculous or not, she has refused me, and she knows I just worship the very ground on which I stand."

Mrs. Pontifex smoothed the soft, lustrous silk of her dress. "Girls often refuse the first time, Darrel. Indeed, I think I refused your poor papًا twice before I finally consented to—"

"Hang it, you don't know Giulia Vincenza, mother, if you think she's that sort. I tell you, she's said she wouldn't have me, and she won't. Haven't I asked her, begged her, time and again? and can't I tell whether or not she's flirting?"

It was the remains of the same pleasant voice of fifteen years ago, and Darrel Pontifex was just the looking man at twenty-five that then gave the promise of—excepting the marks of dissipation that late years had indelibly written on his bold, fair, handsome face—so unlike his mother's—so utterly unlike Giulia Vincenza's, the witching Italian songstress who had made him her hopeless captive.

"Very well, then, Darrel, if you think you know more and better than I do. However, if you propose to let this Miss Vincenza be your the mitten—why—I presume you will take it quietly."

He muttered something that Mrs. Pontifex did not hear; then looked in her face with an expression she knew meant even more than his emphatic answer said:

"If you call it taking it 'quietly' to go off somewhere—the Lord only knows where—and never show my face here again—if you call it 'quietly' for me to know my life is blasted, for love of Giulia Vincenza—all right. Assure as the sun shines I will never see you again, a home again, if she refuses me once more."

Mrs. Pontifex shivered with pain and fright. This darling of hers, for whom she lived, on whom all her hopes were centered—Darrel to leave her! Darrel to blight her life, even as this dark-eyed, heartless beauty would blight his!

Her voice quivered when she spoke to him. "She shall make you happy—make me happy. I will go to her, Darrel, and plead our case, shall I? I will tell her how you love her, how other women have tried in vain to win you and your great wealth, how happy we were until she came to disturb us. I'll beg her, on my knees, Darrel, to be merciful to us, and come to us, your wife, Darrel, and my daughter. I will go, before you leave this house. Wait for me until I come back with good news. She'll not refuse me, dear."

And the elegant Pontifex barouche, with its olive lining, its proud crest on the shining panels, its horses stepping so proudly, and tossing their heads until the gold-plated harness gleamed dazzlingly in the morning sunshine, drew up before the door of the Vincenza's residence; and Mrs. Pontifex alighted, and went in, and waited in the elegant little reception-room till Miss Vincenza should appear.

Directly came a rustle of heavy silken drapery; then a faint odor of Jasmine, then the most regally beautiful girl Mrs. Pontifex had ever seen, whose grand dignity of manner made even that lady just little confused.

"I am Giulia Vincenza, and you wish to see me. You are Mr. Darrel Pontifex's mother, I presume?"

Such a sweet, rich voice it was, and Mrs. Pontifex began her strange errand at once—pleading as only a mother can plead, for what was dearest than life.

The girl listened, gravely; then smiled, carelessly.

"Fifteen years ago, Mrs. Pontifex, when you thrust my sister and myself into jail, knowing we were as innocent as the rude boy who made the complaint, I vowed to have my revenge on you, or him. I think I have it. Do you remember?"

"Giulia never steals, lady; don't lock us up—see, you have your silver—we will go and never come again."

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"You are almost as great a flatterer as Mr. Darrel Pontifex, dear. He swears by me, I believe."

of each other. Death had come to her and him. For ten years her husband had been sleeping in the old church-yard on the hill, and for half that time his wife had lain beneath the same green grass and daisies.

"Yes, Squire Doane is growing old," answered Ruth. "He's fifty-five, isn't he? as much as that, I should think. Seems to me you told me once he was five years older than you are."

"Yes, fifty-five or six," answered Mrs. Cross, just as his knock sounded at the door; and Ruth went to let him in.

Mrs. Cross succeeded in getting the very faintest glimpse of herself in the glass while Ruth was at the door. It was a pleasant face that she saw in the old-fashioned mirror, with faint, late roses showing still in her cheeks, and eyes that had never lost their early sunshines. There were silver threads among the brown hair, banded smoothly back from the forehead, and some lines of care upon her brow. But, she was fifty years old, she thought, and fifty years and a face in which they have left no traces one does not often find together. And then she wondered why she should think anything about her looks. Squire Doane knew that she was growing old as well as she did.

"Good-afternoon, Mary"—it had always been Stephen and Mary between them—he said, as he came in. "I got lame, and thought I'd run in and chat awhile."

"I'm glad you did," she said, cheerily, wheeling out the rocking-chair for him. "What's the use of having neighbors if we ain't neighborly, as aunt Dorcas always says?"

The squire sat down, and Mrs. Cross drew a chair up by the window, and busied herself over her knitting. Ruth sat down in the doorway and hulled the strawberries she had been gathering for tea. When that task was done, she took herself off to the kitchen, and the squire and her mother were left alone.

"Ruth must be a sight of comfort to you," said the squire. "She's a smart, capable girl, Mary."

"Yes," answered Mrs. Cross, with a proud smile. "Ruth's smart, if she is my daughter, and she's a good girl."

"She'll be getting married one of these days," remarked the squire, thoughtfully.

"She'll make a good wife, Mary."

"Yes," answered Mrs. Cross, slowly. "I don't want to let her go, though I suppose I'll have to, some time. I don't know what I should do 'bout her."

"It is lonesome living alone," said the squire, with a sigh. "Lucy's been dead five years next August, and though cousin Sibyl has been a good housekeeper, and kept everything up as well as any one could, I've seen a good many lonesome days. Mary—" with such suddenness that Mrs. Cross was half-startled—"I've been thinking of marrying again. Do you think 'would be foolish'?"

"Ruth must be a sight of comfort to you," said the squire. "She's a smart, capable girl, Mary."

"Yes," answered Mrs. Cross, with a proud smile. "Ruth's smart, if she is my daughter, and she's a good girl."

"She'll be getting married one of these days," remarked the squire, thoughtfully.

"She'll make a good wife, Mary."

"Such a joke!" cried the squire. "Your mother's been trying to marry you and me, when I never thought of such a thing. I've explained the matter to her, and—she says she's willing."

And her mother's face explained all the rest.

"That's more like it!" exclaimed Ruth, and kissed them both. "I didn't believe you wanted such a flighty thing as I am."

"But I know some one who does," cried the squire, chucking her under the chin in the exuberance of his spirits. "Charley'll be home from school next year, and I—well, I guess you know more about it, maybe, than I do."

And Ruth rather thought so, too.

"Men can act so ridiculous, you know," she said. "You can tell him a good deal better than I can. Break the news gently to the dear man, and say I don't believe in old men's darlings," and she went off laughing.

The squire was evidently somewhat ill at ease. He fidgeted about, and looked the family Bible through from beginning to end, read of the births, deaths and marriages, and took a careful inventory of the books on the mantel-shelf.

And she was about as nervous as he was. She felt sorry for him. She was sure he would be disappointed. But he had no right to expect Ruth to look very favorably upon his suit.

At last:

"Have you talked with Ruth?" burst out the squire.

"Yes, and she is opposed to it," answered Mrs. Cross, anxious to have the troublesome affair off her hands. "She says you are too old."

"Too old!" The squire faced round in some astonishment. "Why, I ain't only five years older than you are, am I?"

"No," answered the widow, "but you're thirty-five years older than she is, you know."

"Well, what if I am? What's that got to do with it, I'd like to know? I ain't going to marry her, am I?" demanded the squire, much excited.

"That's what you wanted to do, I supposed," answered Mrs. Cross. "At least that's what I understood you to mean."

"Why, Mary, what a goose!" exclaimed the squire, laughing till he was red in the face.

"Mary Ruth! Good Lord! I meant you!"

Back came all the vanished roses.